



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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Gypsy moth treatments to begin in Seattle's Eastlake area, Kitsap County

OLYMPIA – Plans have been approved to treat sites in Seattle and in Kitsap County with a biological insecticide to rid neighborhoods of reproducing populations of gypsy moths. Officials with the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) say treatments are expected to begin soon.

The two locations are a 12-acre site in the Eastlake neighborhood of Seattle and a 200-acre site in the Evergreen Ridge housing area near Keyport in Kitsap County. The Eastlake site will be treated with ground equipment. The Evergreen Ridge site is expected to be treated by aircraft and ground equipment. Three to five treatments, three to 14 days apart, will be conducted.

“When treatments actually occur depends on the weather,” said Chad Phillips, WSDA eradication coordinator. “We won’t treat in rain or excessive wind. We won’t know until the day before whether conditions are expected to be right for a treatment.”

The first treatment in Eastlake could begin as early as April 8. The first ground treatment in Evergreen Ridge could be conducted as early as April 14. The first aerial treatment at Evergreen Ridge won’t be administered before April 18.

The gypsy moth is one of the worst forest pest insects ever brought into the U.S. Introductions of gypsy moth have been detected in Washington every year since 1977, but permanent populations have never been established here because of the state’s consistent trapping and eradication programs.

The biological insecticide, *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki*, has been used on many previous eradication projects. It is registered for use in the U.S. by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is commonly used by organic farmers. The insecticide is toxic only to moths and butterflies in the caterpillar stage when the insecticide is applied.

As part of the decision-making process on whether to treat the two areas, WSDA prepared two environmental documents that were made available on the Internet and other locations for 30 days of public review and comment. The decision to proceed with the treatment was made jointly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and WSDA.

For more information, citizens may call the department’s toll-free hotline at 1-800-443-6684, or visit the department’s Web site at www.agr.wa.gov, and click on “gypsy moth.”

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